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veyancer's clerk, is certainly true; but as to my being *lower than that*, I deny it, nor do I know to what it alludes. I have gained my present situation by my own exertions, and—

"Mr. Eagle," interrupted his lordship, "if you have indeed been a conveyancer's clerk, I do not think it consistent with my duty to the profession, to advise his Majesty to appoint you one of his counsel."

"My Lord," I cried with some warmth, "I should have hoped my former humble situation would have rather been in my favour."—"I have given you my sentiments, sir," said the chancellor, with a dignity approaching to haughtiness, and in a tone which I saw was intended to conclude all argument. I therefore left the room, saying only, on leaving, that I felt it my duty to submit to the chancellor's pleasure.

"My mortification and distress were of course very great. I was refused, and refused on grounds which I could not remove. Was my birth and its consequences, to be an eternal bar to my advancement? However, I was consoled by the reflection, that my only reproach was my obscure origin; and that my want of success in my application was in no manner owing to myself."

The writer then proceeds to inform us, that he was shortly afterwards appointed to the situation from which he had been so wantonly and unjustly excluded. But how? Not by any exertion of those talents by which he would lead us to suppose *the road to honour and distinction is open to all*, but in consequence of a change in the ministry, by which some of his friends came into office. Had the same chancellor continued to preside over the distribution of official prizes, the plebeian advocate would never have risen above the bar, and the life of a lawyer would never have appeared.—History shews that so far from England being pre-eminently the country in which the road to honour and distinction is open to all, the most despotic governments exhibit the same sudden and unexpected elevations from obscurity to the height of rank; and, generally speaking, the more frequent and rapid in the most despotic.

This difference of opinion as to the inference to be drawn from the life before us, detracts, however, in no manner from the merits of the work itself. It is a point on which differences of opinion will and must exist.—With the exception of the absurd, and we must say unnecessary amalgamation of historic falsehood with imaginative realities, and to the exclusion also of some speeches in parliament arising thereout, we think the work entitled to much praise, and tending strongly to promote what we conceive to have been the author's main object in its composition: the excitement of honourable ambition in young men born and educated in the lower classes of society.

Travels in Kamtchatka and Siberia; with a Narrative of a Residence in China. By Peter Dobell, Counsellor of the Court of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia. 2 vols.—London, Colburn and Bentley. 1830.

SECOND NOTICE.

AFTER a fatiguing and perilous route through the country of the Tongusees, Mr. Dobell at length reaches Ochotsk, where he is obliged

to sojourn a fortnight in order to recruit his health and strength. Ochotsk is not a large town, but one of great importance from its situation on the sea of that name; it is, however, but ill adapted for a naval arsenal, in consequence of the badness of its harbour.

On the road to Yakutsk he falls in with a colony of Siberian exiles.

"After passing to the opposite side of the river Aldan, we found there an establishment similar to that on the Ochotsk side, where likewise there are a number of joutas, and where post-horses are stationed. Behind a large body of meadows, on the declivity of a hill, exposed to the south, we saw several joutas beautifully situated, and, on inquiry, I was informed they contained a colony of banished men, sent thither by order of the Government. They appeared very well off, having comfortable dwellings, cattle, &c. They certainly had few luxuries; but, with common industry, living on the banks of a river abounding with fish and game, and where there was good soil and fine pastures, they could never want for the necessaries of life unless too indolent to procure them. Those people call themselves Possessencies, or colonists, and are styled in Siberia, Neshchastnie Loodie, or unfortunate people; no banished man, though he be a convict of the description, being ever called in that country by a name that can wound his feelings so as to remind him of crimes for which he is already supposed to have been punished, or degrade him in the opinion of the public. This shews not only very sound policy but a proper delicacy of the Governors towards the feelings of these poor people; a delicacy highly commendable, as, by throwing a veil over their past crimes, they not only make them forget what they have been, but induce them to emulate the very many examples before them of retrieved criminals, who have become honest, industrious, good subjects.

"Banishment to such a country as Siberia, then, is certainly no such terrible infliction, except to a Russian, who, perhaps of all beings upon earth, possesses the strongest attachment to the soil on which he grows—taking root like the trees that surround him, and pining when transplanted to another spot, even though it should be to a neighbouring province, better than his own. Too much praise cannot be bestowed on the humane system adopted by the Russian Government in saving the lives of criminals without distinction, and transporting them to Siberia, to augment the population of a fine country much in want of inhabitants, where their morals are strictly watched, and where they soon become useful, good people."

"Having seen the good effects of the penal code of Russia, what I say on the subject is no more than what truth and justice demand; and I wish for humanity's sake that so bright an example, which sheds a ray of unsullied glory on her sovereigns, may be followed with equal success by every nation of the earth."

It is with much pleasure we add the following passages, putting beyond all doubt the progress of agriculture in those hitherto unprofitable and barren regions:

* In Siberia there are certainly instances where convicts have again committed crimes, and some of them murder; these are confined to the mines for life. There are, however, but few examples of this sort; the majority of the convicts acquiring habits of industry and good conduct superior to the same class of people in Russia.

"In the autumn of 1813, the first time I travelled along the banks of the Lena, I found that agriculture had advanced no farther than Olekma, six hundred versts above Yakutsk. But at my return in the spring of 1818, it had already begun to advance, and in the summer of 1827, when I again mounted against the stream of the Lena, in my journey from Manilla and Kamtchatka to St. Petersburg, I found grain cultivated even in the environs of Yakutsk, and on the banks of the river Amga between Yakutsk and Ochotsk! At the latter place there is a settlement of Russian peasants, who till the ground; and they say it is extremely fertile. Barley and spring-rye, called in Russian yaritsa, are the two grains which succeed best in those new settlements. The crops along the Lena were at first often destroyed by mildew and hoar frost, because the country being mountainous, the inhabitants erroneously thought the grain would succeed better in the valleys and low grounds. They have, however, at length discovered their mistake; and the traveller now sees fine fields of grain on the sides of the mountains, where they often prosper, while those below are injured. Even the Yakuts along the Lena, and on the numerous large islands which divide that fine stream, have taken seriously to agriculture; so that, in spite of the little encouragement received from the local Government, the natives having now found their account in the labours of the field, there is every reason to conclude these will spread over the province.

"I was not a little astonished to see, in 1827, the amazing progress population and agriculture had made, during an absence of ten years, between Katchuk and Irkutsk. From a hill, after passing a station called Judofsky, one has a fine prospect of the surrounding country, laid out in corn fields, and interspersed with villages, farms, &c. One of those villages, which we passed through, called Oiyuk, had then a couple of churches, and upwards of two hundred houses, but is now quite a town."

Upon departing from Irkutsk, our traveller passes rapidly through Tomsk and Tobolsk—the former containing about 10,000, the latter 30,000 inhabitants—and having reached the frontier of Russia in Europe, closes this part of his narrative with some general reflections on the greatness of the empire of the Autocrat.

The *Residence in China* is a narrative founded on the author's personal observation at three distinct periods. His first visit to the land of tea was in 1798—his second in 1803—and his last in 1820. On the second occasion he resided in Canton for seven years. He never got admission to the interior of the country beyond the confines of Canton; but, with such opportunities as he did enjoy, he is enabled to supply us with many interesting particulars.

On entering Macao roads, the ship which carried Mr. Dobell, on his first visit, was boarded by a *comprador* and his party. This is a sort of higher order of *commissionaire* or factor.

"He, and several servants who accompanied him, wishing to hire themselves, were dressed in long gowns of silk, and white and blue Nankin; but their appearance was so effeminate I could not help imagining myself surrounded by women. The construction of their boats, after the manner of the country, roused

our curiosity, as did also the sails made of mats, and the oars spliced; whilst the rowers, instead of rowing together, rowed one after the other. They spoke to us in English, or rather a bad dialect of that language, the composition and pronunciation of which are so curious and difficult, that an Englishman must reside a year or two at Canton before he can speak it fluently. He is truly surprised to find his native tongue so corrupted in their mouths that he can scarcely understand it, yet is obliged to adopt their abominable jargon to make himself understood. None of the Chinese, either rich or poor, understand those who speak plain English to them.

"The comprador proffered his services, and pulled a large pocket-book from under his petticoats, stuffed with recommendations from those whom he formerly served, which he presented for our perusal. Our captain engaged him as a ship-comprador, and one of his friends as a house or factory comprador. They were (as likewise the servants) prepared with whole bundles of recommendations."

"One of the most romantic spots in the world is the *Caza de horta*, that overlooks the inner harbour of Macao, rendered famous for having a grot, where Camoens, the celebrated Portuguese poet, composed his poem of the *Lusiad*. The garden has been much beautified by two British chiefs, Mr. Drummond and Mr. Roberts, who both took much pains to improve and embellish it."

"What an immense number of hands are employed in preparing the single article of tea, not only in the cultivation, but the packing, transportation, &c.! Making a tea-box employs a carpenter, a plumber, a blacksmith, a paper-maker, a person who pastes the paper and chunams† it, another who ties the box with rattans, and the coolies or labourers, who pack, carry it, &c. &c."

"Deprive China of the English trade alone, and some millions of inhabitants would be thrown out of employ and starve, or perhaps revolt against their Government. It certainly would be a serious inconvenience to England; ‡ yet there is little doubt but the Chinese would feel still more at having an overstock of nearly thirty millions of pounds of tea on their hands, and the people who were occupied in preparing it all left without the means of a livelihood. For this reason the Chinese, although very impertinent in their quarrels with the British, take care never to go to the last extremity."

"I regret that I should oppose what seems to be the prevailing opinion of the day; but, giving my own conscientiously, I must express my thorough persuasion, that the best possible method of trading with the Chinese is by companies (with whatever modifications) until the Chinese Government shall be prevailed with to receive Europeans on a more liberal footing,

† Chunam is composed of blood and lime, and makes a very strong cement. The paper, put on with it, and then oiled, will not admit water.

‡ If ever the British Government shall be so unwise as to deprive the Company of their monopoly, and render the trade free, the question of its importance will very soon be put to the trial; for I am persuaded it will not continue two seasons without coming to a serious rupture. I do not wish to enter into the spirit of a controversy about to take place on this subject; but, if I did, it would not be difficult to produce many strong and substantial reasons in favour of the monopoly, which persons who view those matters at a distance, and are unacquainted with the Chinese, cannot have an opportunity of knowing.

and shall change, *in toto*, its policy in respect to foreign nations. National prejudices, where they are so deeply rooted as in China, cannot be at once opposed with success—nay, they must be respected, by those who find it their interest to preserve commerce and friendship."

We subjoin the two following little extracts for the special information of some of our most gentle readers:

"The Chinese, or at least all those who can afford it, drink their tea out of a large cup with a cover, without milk and sugar. A small portion of the leaves (which some are so particular as to have weighed,) is put into the cup, boiling water poured upon them, and the cup covered. After a minute or two, they take off the cover to regale themselves with the odour, as well as to prevent its becoming too strong. They then (as I have before observed) drink it whilst it is yet so hot that they can only sip a few drops at a time. Afterwards hot water is poured again on the same leaves, even to the third or fourth time, until all the flavour is exhausted. This method prevents the tea's having the strong bitter taste that it acquires if drawn in a metal tea-pot."

"Tea is the common beverage of all classes, and is always drunk warm, even in the hottest weather. Mechanics and labourers, who cannot afford to drink it as the rich do, on the leaves, draw it in an immense large block-tin tea-pot, cased with wood, and having cotton-wool put between the wood and the tea-pot, to preserve the heat longer. A spout protrudes from the wooden case, for convenience of pouring off the tea. Most Chinese love to drink their tea very hot—one of the causes, perhaps, that tend to produce the relaxation, weakness of digestion, and languor of nerve, with which they are much afflicted."

Mr. Dobell is an amateur medical man; some of his remarks on the diseases of China, are not unworthy of notice.

"One of the diseases that have made the most havoc in China is the small-pox. Vaccination, however, has been introduced there by the humane and indefatigable Dr. Pearson, the head surgeon of the British factory, who not only vaccinated numbers himself, but also taught the Chinese themselves to vaccinate. The leprosy, venereal, and elephantiasis, are also diseases common in China; and when the two last are combined, I believe them altogether incurable. There is a law that obliges whoever is seized with elephantiasis, whether rich or poor, high or low, to quit his house and family, resign his property over to his relations, and become a beggar and dependant on their bounty, besides being forced to inhabit the boats, which are moored in a particular part of the river, for those people to live in who are afflicted with this terrible disorder. Its effects on the human system are truly shocking to contemplate. The loss of the nose, lips, hands, and feet, is very common; added to which, the body and limbs are swollen, the skin raised as if inflated, the lymph, corrupted, oozes at every pore in a bloody ichor—forming, altogether, the most mis-shapen and disgusting object ever beheld. When this misfortune happens to a rich man, he confines himself, and endeavours to keep it a secret, by bribing the Mandarin of the district; but should any of his relations have designs on his fortune, they can apply to higher authority, and have him immediately removed and made a beggar."

"Blindness is extremely common amongst the poorer classes; and the Chinese told me that many are born blind. If this be true, at least the idea is quite absurd that the steam from the hot rice, which the poor people eat out of a bowl held close to the face, for the convenience of pushing it into their mouths with the *chop-sticks*, may be the cause of it. Others suppose that the use of rice instead of bread produces it; but I rather imagine it is a disease resulting from the climate."

"There is, certainly, more deformity amongst the human species in China than in other parts of the world, which may be accounted for from the sedentary habits and feeble constitutions of the women who live on shore, and who have the disgusting, small maimed feet. Those who inhabit the boats have large feet; and both men and women are, generally, as well formed as the people of other parts of the world. Mechanics and shopkeepers, who also lead sedentary lives, have many chronic complaints; and all classes those which result from debauchery and smoking opium. Consumption and spitting of blood carry off those who make too much use of opium."

"There are no surgeons in China; consequently, anatomy is a science of which they are almost totally ignorant. I once conversed with one of the first physicians of Canton, through a good interpreter, and found he was not only ignorant of anatomy, but had none but the most confused notions of the circulation of the blood. He believed that it circulated differently on the right and left sides—the reason, said he, why Chinese physicians feel both wrists when they visit a patient! Nature, and moderation in eating and drinking, do more for the Chinese than all their doctors."

We had selected several amusing sketches of the domestic habits of the natives, but our limits will not accommodate us as we could wish. The following, however, we must find room for:

"Shortly after a marriage has been celebrated, several dinners are given by the parents of the newly-married couple; and, on these occasions, after dinner, the bride is shown to the guests for a few minutes, in close approach, though no one, except her nearest relations, is allowed to speak to her. I once had the good fortune to be invited, together with three other Europeans, to a dinner of this kind, and the husband took some pains to show us his wife, who was handsome, by holding a candle close to her face for some time. He then put it on the floor, to show us her beautiful small feet, of only five to six inches long: I confess I did not admire them, as she could not stand on them without the aid of two maid servants, who supported her on either side. She appeared about fourteen or fifteen years of age, and not in the least embarrassed—although, as is customary, her eyes were kept fixed on the floor, whilst the Europeans were near her. However, female curiosity got the better of *old custom*, and she could not refrain from taking a glance at us, to see what kind of animal was that *Pan-Qui*, she, no doubt, had heard represented as a terrible devil. Her eyes were black, and sparkling; and, altogether, she was the prettiest-faced Chinese woman of the better sort that I had seen; for, in general, they are far from being handsome. I was told she was of a good family, but not very rich; the parents of the young man having chosen her for her

beauty—a circumstance very rare in China, where matches are almost always made from interested motives."

Almost all the Chinese whom our author has seen, except those of the very lowest class, could read and write. Education, he says, to a certain extent, is more common and better diffused among them than amongst the poor of any other country.

"In a country where the industrious find readily the means of subsistence, and where *Shing-Shangs** abound, the expense of having a few characters of the ordinary sort imprinted on a child's memory cannot be much, nor beyond what most of the common people can afford, who have health and strength to labour. Most of the Chinese are naturally intelligent, and, applying themselves diligently to whatever they take in hand, of course acquire soon what they wish to learn. In short, they are naturally a well-disposed, excellent people, whose good qualities, under a better government, would render them rich and happy. It is impossible, even now, under all the difficulties they have to encounter, to live a month in China without being struck with admiration at the activity, industry, perseverance, and frugality of the middling and lower classes. If a Chinese can only find the means of amassing a few dollars, he will certainly increase his capital by economy and persevering attention to his business, until he places himself far out of the reach of want. It must not be inferred from this, that there are not a great many debauched and profligate people amongst them. There are certainly very many; but fewer, in proportion to the amount of population, than in other countries.

"The facts I have stated respecting the administration of their government prove it to be a very bad one; and it must always be considered a national disgrace, to see a country destitute of public hospitals, or any humane institutions whatever, whilst crowds of beggars die of want in the streets!"

We know not where so much information relating to Siberia and China, particularly the latter country, can be found, conveyed in so compendious and pleasing a form, as in these two volumes of Mr. Dobell.

* Literally astrologers, who also make literature their profession, and act as domestic tutors.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

A Dictionary of the English Language, intended to exhibit:—1. The origin and the affinities of every English word, as far as they have been ascertained, with its primary signification, as now generally established.—2. The Orthography and the Pronunciation of Words, as sanctioned by reputable usage, and where this usage is divided, as determinable by a reference to the principle of Analogy.—3. Accurate and discriminating definitions of technical and scientific terms, with numerous authorities and illustrations; to which are prefixed, an introductory dissertation on the origin, history, and connection of the Languages of Western Asia and Europe, and a concise Grammar, philosophical and practical of the English language. By W. Webster, L. L. D. 2 vols. 4to. Black, Young and Young, London.

The preceding announcement is the title of a Work, publishing in Numbers, the first of which has recently been put out. The author, as

appears from several passages in the introduction, is a citizen of the United States. As far as the philosophy and orthography of the language is concerned, we see no reason why a work of this nature should not be compiled by a Transatlantic, as well as by an indigenous Englishman; with respect to what concerns pronunciation, "as sanctioned by reputable usage," we cannot but entertain doubts whether the means attainable by a foreigner to acquire the necessary information on this delicate portion of his undertaking, be sufficient to entitle him to promulge a new system of orthography, or to make any serious alterations in that already sanctioned by the authority of writers whose works have met with general approbation.

But we cannot yet finally decide on this point. The work is only partially before us. The number published, contains a portion of the introduction, and the greater part of the letter A of the Dictionary. What appears there, bears ample indications that the author possesses many of the qualities requisite for an undertaking so arduous. His knowledge of languages appears to be extensive, and his researches for authorities to establish the meaning of words not to be met with in previous dictionaries, numerous. The introduction of technical and scientific terms is a very valuable addition to a general dictionary. They have been hitherto excluded from works of this description; but the rapid extension of useful knowledge, which has rendered the Arts and Sciences themselves the usual subjects of conversation, in the more educated portions of society, and through which they are extending with equal rapidity into the lower classes, renders the addition absolutely necessary. Terms, any allusion to which would, some years ago, have been considered pedantic, are now of common occurrence, and a dictionary which comprehends them, must command a preference.

The introduction, which, as we have already noticed, is as yet incomplete, exhibits much literary research. It commences with an enquiry into the origin of languages, and the causes of their variations. Commencing with the Scriptural account, the author conceives that the language spoken by Noah and his sons, branched out into two great divisions, the one being that spoken by the descendants of Shem and Ham, who peopled all the great plain situated north and west of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean on the east, and the Arabic Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea on the west, together with the Northern coast of Africa.

The languages spoken by the nations inhabiting those regions, except the Coptic, he names Shemitic or Assyrian; that spoken by the descendants of Japheth who peopled Asia minor, the northern parts of Asia, about the Euxine and Caspian, and all Europe, he calls Japhetic.

With respect to the changes produced at the time of the building of the celebrated tower of Babel, though he recognizes the historical fact, he does not consider them as the sole cause of the varieties now existing. "It is probable," he says, "that some differences of language were produced by the confusion; but neither that event nor any supernatural event is necessary to account for the differences of dialect, or of languages now existing. The different modern languages of the Gothic or

Teutonic stock, all originated in the natural course of events, and the differences are as great between them as they are between the languages of the Shemitic stock.

Waiving, as we must, in this introductory notice, any observations on the position here laid down, we cannot but remark, that the writer wholly passes over many of the languages now spoken in different and very extensive regions; we see no mention of the Chinese, and what appears to us still more extraordinary, the languages of the aboriginal Americans, are passed over as if they had no existence. Had his disquisition been confined to those languages from which the English, which constitutes its main object, originated, or with which it is more or less connected, the omission would be justifiable; but when he adopts so decidedly, the primary two-fold division of the original language, to the necessary exclusion of any other, and considers the confusion at Babel as only of secondary effect, he ought, we conceive, to have allotted all the other known languages of the world, their proper positions under one or other of the great stocks. It may perhaps be said, that on reference to the title it will appear, that he directs his attention solely to the languages of Western Asia and Europe; if so, the sweeping clause in the commencement of the introduction, in which he makes mention of two, and only two, radical languages, requires some modification or explanation.

On the pronunciation of the English language, Dr. Webster is very copious. His account of the attempts made to reduce it to system, commencing with that of Elphinstone, is full and satisfactory. He points out several errors, into which preceding writers on this part of Grammar have fallen, and several changes through which the oral language of the country has deviated, from what was the standard some time ago. The notation adopted by him, for expressing the true sound of the vowels, is much simpler than that introduced by Sheridan, and followed by Walker; and if found equally efficient, (which we cannot decide on till we have seen more of the book,) will of itself entitle it to a high place among publications of this class.

On the whole, we have viewed this number with much gratification. Independently of its absolute merits, we greet it on account of the quarter from which it comes. It is one of the waves of the reflux-tide of civilization towards the shores whence it first arose, equally honorable to the giver and to the receiver. The second number is just published, but has not yet reached Dublin.

The Family Library, No. 12. Southey's Life of Nelson. Murray, London.

We know of no more excellent or delightful piece of biography in any language than Southey's Life of Nelson; it is a book worthy at once of the hero and of the author, and that is speaking volumes. The period when first we read it, and resolved that we too should be a hero, still haunts one of the greenest spots in our memory. The principal novel feature we have observed in the new and beautiful edition now presented to the public, is a series of wood cuts, spiritedly designed by G. Cruikshank, and admirably engraved by Thompson and Williams.